Alyce Dixon, Women's Army Corps, 1943 – 1946



WWII Veteran Alyce Dixon has always followed the beat of her own drum. Born September 11, 1907, as Alice Lillian Ellis, she changed the spelling of her name when she was 16-years-old, inspired by actress Alyce Mills.

Originally from Boston, what started as a visit to Washington, D.C., in 1924 turned into a permanent move for Dixon's family. She graduated from Paul Lawrence Dunbar Senior High School and attended Howard University. Her academic career was cut short, however, when she decided to quit school and work to help her parents support their family – her main priority. She went on to work at the Lincoln Theatre, an insurance company, the Census Bureau, and eventually the Pentagon, where she was one of its first civilian employees to join.

Dixon's military career began on a whim; she joined thinking that they could help cure her vitiligo, a condition that causes skin depigmentation. Even though that wasn't possible, Dixon went on to diligently serve the nation.

After joining the Women's Army Corps, (originally the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps), in 1943, she was assigned to the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion, the only unit of African American women in the Women's Army Corps to serve overseas during World War II. Her unit was tasked with eliminating the backlog of stacks of undelivered mail and packages addressed to U.S. service members, but stored in British and French warehouses. Knowing how important it was for these soldiers to receive their mail, the 6888th worked tirelessly to eradicate the backlog – and they did.

Serving in Scotland, England and France, her commitment to the soldiers did not go unrecognized, as she received the Good Conduct Medal to commemorate her service to the Army. She continued her public service, working for the federal government for 35 years and volunteering at Washington Hospital Center and Howard University Hospital for 12 years.

Now 106-years-old, Dixon is the oldest female resident of the Washington DC VA Medical Center's Community Living Center. But don't let her age fool you, as she is still sharp as a tack. She chuckles as she says, "God left me with a few marbles, I'm so blessed."